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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/675,779	09/30/2003	Deborah R. McManus	F-587-01	6541

7590 08/03/2007
Pitney Bowes Inc.
Intellectual Property and Technology Law Department
35 Waterview Drive
P.O. Box 3000
Shelton, CT 06484

EXAMINER

MCLEAN, NEIL R

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2625

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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08/03/2007

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/675,779	Applicant(s) MCMANUS ET AL.	
	Examiner Neil R. McLean	Art Unit 2625	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 09/30/2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>06/21/2004</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Priority

1. Acknowledgment is made of applicant's claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d). The certified copy has been filed in parent Application No. 60/421230, filed on 10/25/2002.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 4, 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carlin et al. (US 2002/0184324), in view of Ryan, Jr. (7,225,170).

Regarding Claim 1:

Carlin et al. teaches a method for monitoring a status of mail communications created by a large scale document production and management process, the production and management process including a plurality of stages selected from the following group:

utilizing a print stream to generate documents ([0010] 'a separate print file for each mail job is **created** using the variable data'), printing documents on a printer in accordance with

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the print stream ([0028] 'a printer 102 connected to the processor to receive images to be printed'), forming completed mail pieces on an inserter from the printed documents in accordance with mail piece creation data files ([0010] '**composing** a commingled print file from the plurality of electronic data files'), sorting the completed mail pieces on an outgoing sorter ([0047] 'mail pieces are **sorted** (usually geographically, such as by zip code)') in accordance with carrier service specifications ([0030] 'In the CASS certification process, the street address information for a mail piece is compared against a database provided by the USPS'), delivering the completed mail pieces to a recipient by a carrier service ([0009] 'The bundles are then **delivered** to a post office for mailing to the addressees');

the method comprising:

specifying a non-recurring mail piece identifier for a particular mail piece ([0043] 'each printed page of each mail piece includes a **unique identifier** such as a bar code and/or alphanumeric symbol embedded thereon that **identifies the particular page and mail piece**'.);

including separate communications to separate individual recipients ([0011] 'Because the print file is created **separately** for each job, there is no chance that variable data from one customer will be combined with fixed data for another customer'.) at a given delivery address in the particular mail piece (Referring to Table 1 on page 4, [0038] 'The fixed data 301 for each mail piece in a mail job may be the **same** or may be **different**'.);

specifying non-recurring communication identifiers ([0011], 'The journal file includes an entry for each mail piece in the mail job. for each communication included with the particular mail piece');

relating the mail piece identifier and communication identifiers ([0012] 'the print and journal files are **commingled**'.)

monitoring status of the particular mail piece ([0043] 'The IDF file 307 is used to **control** the insertion machinery and **track** each page of each mail piece'); and

reporting on a status ([0041] 'The journal file includes a separate **record** for each mail piece in the mail job'.) of the individual communication based on a monitored status of the related mail piece ([0041] 'the journal file 309 is not static', 'it is **updated** and added to by subsequent processes'.)

Carlin et al. all of the limitations of Claim 1 except Carlin et al. fails to disclose expressly delivering a response mail piece from the recipient by the carrier service, and sorting the response mail piece at an incoming sorter.

Ryan, Jr. teaches a method of operating a postage metering system, a method of operating a data center, a method of operating a business **reply mail** processing system, a **data structure** for use in **processing** business reply mail and a business reply mail piece. Generally, this is accomplished by associating a delivery address for a mail campaign, of which the business reply mail piece is a part, with a registration ID number that is subsequently used by a recipient (user) of the business reply mail piece to apply postage to the business reply mail piece.

Ryan Jr. also teaches a data center 200 which includes a computing system (main frame computer, network server, or the like) 210 in operative communication with a user database 220, a sender registration database 230 and an address database 240.

Ryan Jr. teaches delivering a response mail piece (20 in Figure 1) from the recipient by the carrier service (Column 7, lines 5-16), and sorting the response mail piece at an incoming sorter (Column 6, lines 43-48; 'Next, at 512, the data center 200 uses the ID number 26 to search the sender registration database 230 for the delivery address 22 that corresponds to the ID number 26 and uses the stored delivery address to generate and transmit the postage indicium 28 to the postage metering system 400').

Note: It is inherent that during the process of receiving and updating the sender registration database that the process of sorting is happening since the ID number 26 Ryan, Jr. may be comprised of any combination of human and/or machine readable characters in any conventional format, such as: **alphanumeric or bar code**.

Ryan, Jr. and Carlin et al. are combinable because they are from the same field of endeavor. The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to track and improve computer based postage metering systems that handles business reply mail pieces in a more effective manner.

"The present invention improves many aspects of applying postage to business reply mail pieces. For example, the users benefit in that: (i) they are able to use the pre-printed BRMP 20 and do not have to consume their own envelope or label stock; and (ii) entry of a three or four line delivery address 22 is simplified. As another example, the data center 200 benefits in that address hygiene occurs once for a mail campaign and not for each transaction session at the user end. This saves valuable time and computer resources. As another example, it should be clear that according to the present invention, the postage indicium 28 has embedded within it, as required by the IBIP

Specifications, a post office zip code that matches the post net bar code that is typically already printed on the BRMP 20 (not shown) by the sender" (Column 6, line 56 – Column 7, line 4).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine the business reply mail system as taught by Ryan, Jr. with the method and system for electronic commingling of hybrid mail as disclosed by Carlin et al. to obtain the invention as specified in the above In Claim 1.

Regarding Claim 4:

Carlin et al. teaches a method of claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

storing data ([0028] 'MPF 1 preferably comprises a processor 100 and associated mass storage device') relating to the individual communications in an individual communication data file separate from the mail piece creation data file ([0035] 'The SMF 3 provides central storage for application programs), the individual communications data file including at least the non-recurring communication identifier ([0043] '**each** printed page of **each** mail piece includes a **unique identifier** such as a bar code and/or alphanumeric symbol embedded thereon that **identifies the particular page and mail piece**'.), the corresponding mail piece identifier ([0011], 'The journal file includes an entry for each mail piece in the mail job. for each communication included with the particular mail piece'), and some descriptive information about the individual communication ([0035] 'and associated fixed data in the preferred embodiment'; and

storing the mail piece identifier in the mail piece creation data file ([0041] 'The journal file includes a separate record for each mail piece in the mail job').

Regarding Claim 5:

Carlin et al. teaches a method for monitoring status of mail communications created by a large scale document production and management process, the method comprising:

utilizing a print stream to generate individual communications ([0010] 'a **separate** print file for each mail job is created using the variable data');

associating a communication identifier with each communication([0011], 'The journal file includes an entry for each mail piece in the mail job. for each communication included with the particular mail piece');

printing documents on a printer in accordance with the print stream ([0028] 'a **printer** 102 connected to the processor to receive images to be printed');

providing document printing status data to a lifecycle monitoring computer ([0043] 'The IDF file 307 is used to **control** the insertion machinery and **track** each page of each mail piece');

forming completed mail pieces on an inserter from the printed documents in accordance with mail piece creation data files, at least some of the completed mail pieces including more than one individual communications per envelope sent to a particular address ([0010] '**composing** a commingled print file from the plurality of electronic data files');

associating a mail piece identifier with each mail piece in the mail piece creation data files ([0052], 'A unique identifier, such as a bar code and/or alphanumeric ID code, preferably is inserted into each page image for each **mail piece** while transferring the page images to the commingled print file.');

associating each communication identifier with a corresponding mail piece identifier ([0011], 'The journal file includes an entry for each mail piece in the mail job. for each communication included with the particular mail piece');

providing mail piece formation status data and associated document identifier data from the inserter to the lifecycle monitoring computer ([0043] 'The IDF file 307 is used to control the insertion machinery and track each page of each mail piece'), sorting the completed mail pieces on an outgoing sorter ([0047] 'mail pieces are sorted (usually geographically, such as by zip code)');

providing outgoing sorting data and associated document identifier data to the lifecycle monitoring computer ([0050] 'Once the commingled journal file 405 has been created and presorted, the commingled print file 407 and commingled IDF file 403 are created based on the presorted, commingled journal file');

delivering finished sorted mail pieces to a carrier service ([0009] 'The bundles are then delivered to a post office for mailing to the addressees'), the carrier service providing mail piece tracking data;

collecting carrier service tracking data for mail pieces and reply documents handled by the carrier service ([0031] 'Preferably, address correction in the U.S. is accomplished using the FAST FORWARD **database** provided by the USPS.');

providing the collected carrier service tracking data to the lifecycle monitoring computer ([0031] 'Performing address correction for each name as it is received represents a dramatic improvement');

Carlin et al. all of the limitations of Claim 1 except Carlin et al. fails to disclose expressly delivering a response mail piece from the recipient by the carrier service, and sorting the response mail piece at an incoming sorter.

Ryan, Jr. teaches a method of operating a postage metering system, a method of operating a data center, a method of operating a business **reply mail** processing system, a **data structure** for use in **processing** business reply mail and a business reply mail piece. Generally, this is accomplished by associating a delivery address for a mail campaign, of which the business reply mail piece is a part, with a registration ID number that is subsequently used by a recipient (user) of the business reply mail piece to apply postage to the business reply mail piece.

Ryan Jr. also teaches a data center 200 which includes a computing system (main frame computer, network server, or the like) 210 in operative communication with a user database 220, a sender registration database 230 and an address database 240.

Ryan Jr. teaches delivering a response mail piece (20 in Figure 1) from the recipient by the carrier service (Column 7, lines 5-16), and sorting the response mail piece at an incoming sorter (Column 6, lines 43-48; 'Next, at 512, the data center 200 uses the ID number 26 to search the sender registration database 230 for the delivery address 22 that corresponds to the ID number 26 and uses the stored delivery address to generate and transmit the postage indicium 28 to the postage metering system 400').

Note: It is inherent that during the process of receiving and updating the sender registration database that the process of sorting is happening since the ID number 26 Ryan, Jr. may be comprised of any combination of human and/or machine readable characters in any conventional format, such as: **alphanumeric or bar code**.

Ryan, Jr. and Carlin et al. are combinable because they are from the same field of endeavor. The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to track and improve computer based postage metering systems that handles business reply mail pieces in a more effective manner.

"The present invention improves many aspects of applying postage to business reply mail pieces. For example, the users benefit in that: (i) they are able to use the pre-printed BRMP 20 and do not have to consume their own envelope or label stock; and (ii) entry of a three or four line delivery address 22 is simplified. As another example, the data center 200 benefits in that address hygiene occurs once for a mail campaign and not for each transaction session at the user end. This saves valuable time and computer resources. As another example, it should be clear that according to the present invention, the postage indicium 28 has embedded within it, as required by the IBIP Specifications, a post office zip code that matches the post net bar code that is typically already printed on the BRMP 20 (not shown) by the sender" (Column 6, line 56 – Column 7, line 4).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine the business reply mail system as taught by Ryan, Jr. with the method and system for electronic commingling of

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hybrid mail as disclosed by Carlin et al. to obtain the invention as specified in the above In Claim 1.

Regarding Claim 6:

Carlin et al. teaches a method for monitoring status of communications created by a large scale document production and management process, the production and management process including a plurality of stages selected from the following group:

utilizing a print stream to generate documents ([0010] 'a separate print file for each mail job is **created** using the variable data'), printing the documents on a printer in accordance with the print stream ([0028] 'a printer 102 connected to the processor to receive images to be printed'), forming completed mail pieces on an inserter from the printed documents in accordance with mail piece creation data files ([0010] '**composing** a commingled print file from the plurality of electronic data files'), sorting the completed mail pieces on an outgoing sorter ([0047] 'mail pieces are **sorted** (usually geographically, such as by zip code)') in accordance with carrier service specifications ([0030] 'In the CASS certification process, the street address information for a mail piece is compared against a database provided by the USPS'), delivering the completed mail pieces to a recipient by a carrier service ([0009] 'The bundles are then **delivered** to a post office for mailing to the addressees') specifying a non-recurring mail piece identifier for a particular mail piece ([0043] '**each** printed page of **each** mail piece includes a **unique identifier** such as a bar code and/or alphanumeric symbol embedded thereon that **identifies the particular page and mail piece**'.);

including separate communications to separate individual recipients at a given delivery address in the particular mail piece ([0011] 'Because the print file is created **separately** for **each** job, there is no chance that variable data from one customer will be combined with fixed data for another customer'.);

specifying non-recurring communication identifiers for each communication included with the particular mail piece ([0011], 'The journal file includes an entry for each mail piece in the mail job. for each communication included with the particular mail piece');

relating ([0012] 'the print and journal files are **commingled**') the mail piece identifier ([0043] 'each printed page of **each** mail piece includes a **unique identifier** such as a bar code and/or alphanumeric symbol embedded thereon that **identifies the particular page and mail piece**'.) and communication identifiers ([0011], 'The journal file includes an entry for each mail piece in the mail job. for each communication included with the particular mail piece');

storing records relating to individual mail pieces processed by the document production and management process, each record being identified by a mail piece identifier ([0041] 'The journal file includes a separate record for **each** mail piece in the mail job');

storing records relating to individual communications included in the mail pieces, each record being identified by a communication identifier ([0011], 'The journal file includes an entry for each mail piece in the mail job. for each communication included with the particular mail piece');

monitoring the status of the individual mail pieces during a plurality of stages in the document production and management process([0043] 'The IDF file 307 is used to **control** the insertion machinery and **track** each page of each mail piece');

relating the monitored status of individual mail pieces to the mail piece identifier ([0012] 'the print and journal files are **commingled**').);

relating the monitored status of individual mail pieces to corresponding communication identifiers([0012] 'the print and journal files are **commingled**').);

updating the mail piece records to indicate the monitored status of individual documents throughout the document production and management process ([0050] The corresponding entry in the **commingled** journal file 405 is then **updated** to reflect the location of the page images in the **commingled** print file 407);

updating the individual communication records to indicate the monitored status of individual communications throughout the document production and management process ('The **commingled** IDF file 403 is created in a manner similar to that discussed above in connection with the creation of the **commingled** print file 407. That is, for each record in the individual journal file 309, the corresponding record is retrieved from a respective individual IDF file 307 and copied into the **commingled** IDF file 403 in the same order as the entries in the **commingled** journal file 405.');

and displaying the status of one or more individual mail pieces and individual communications during the document production and management process based on the updated stored records ([0043] 'The IDF file 307 is used to **control** the insertion machinery and **track** each page of each mail piece').

Carlin et al. discloses all of the limitations of Claim 1 except Carlin et al. fails to disclose expressly delivering a response mail piece from the recipient by the carrier service, and sorting the response mail piece at an incoming sorter.

Ryan, Jr. teaches a method of operating a postage metering system, a method of operating a data center, a method of operating a business **reply mail** processing

system, a **data structure** for use in **processing** business reply mail and a business reply mail piece. Figure 4 is a schematic diagram of the information flow for a **life cycle** of a business reply mail piece in accordance with the Ryan, Jr.'s invention.

Ryan Jr. also teaches a data center 200 which includes a computing system (main frame computer, network server, or the like) 210 in operative communication with a user database 220, a sender registration database 230 and an address database 240.

Ryan Jr. teaches delivering a response mail piece (20 in Figure 1) from the recipient by the carrier service (Column 7, lines 5-16), and sorting the response mail piece at an incoming sorter (Column 6, lines 43-48; 'Next, at 512, the data center 200 uses the ID number 26 to search the sender registration database 230 for the delivery address 22 that corresponds to the ID number 26 and uses the stored delivery address to generate and transmit the postage indicium 28 to the postage metering system 400').

Note: It is inherent that during the process of receiving and updating the sender registration database that the process of sorting occurs since the Ryan Jr.'s ID number 26 may be comprised of any combination of human and/or machine readable characters in any conventional format, such as: **alphanumeric or bar code**.

Ryan, Jr. and Carlin et al. are combinable because they are from the same field of endeavor. The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to track and improve computer based postage metering systems that handles business reply mail pieces in a more effective manner.

"The present invention improves many aspects of applying postage to business reply mail pieces. For example, the users benefit in that: (i) they are able to use the pre-

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printed BRMP 20 and do not have to consume their own envelope or label stock; and (ii) entry of a three or four line delivery address 22 is simplified. As another example, the data center 200 benefits in that address hygiene occurs once for a mail campaign and not for each transaction session at the user end. This saves valuable time and computer resources. As another example, it should be clear that according to the present invention, the postage indicium 28 has embedded within it, as required by the IBIP Specifications, a post office zip code that matches the post net bar code that is typically already printed on the BRMP 20 (not shown) by the sender" (Column 6, line 56 – Column 7, line 4).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine the business reply mail system as taught by Ryan, Jr. with the method and system for electronic commingling of hybrid mail as disclosed by Carlin et al. to obtain the invention as specified in the above claims.

4. Claims 2, 3 and are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carlin et al., and Ryan, Jr. as applied to claim 1 above, in view of Lhomme (US 7,003,133).

Carlin et al. teaches a method for monitoring the status of mail communications including the electronic commingling of hybrid mail as described above and Ryan, Jr. teaches a business mail reply system. However, Carlin et al., and Ryan, Jr. do not

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disclose expressly the use of a camera which captures an image of the completed envelope.

Lhomme discloses a **video-coding station** for an installation for automatically processing postal items, the station comprising a central processor unit for holding a **digitized image** of a postal item in memory, a screen connected to the central processor unit for displaying said image of a postal item in such a manner as to enable an operator to see a postal address of the postal item in the image, and a keyboard connected to the central processor unit to enable the operator to key in the postal address of the item.

A packet conveyed flat on a conveyor belt passes under a **camera** which picks up a digitized image IP of the packet. In general, such a digitized image is subjected to operations such as binarization, and the elimination of isolated black pixels, such operations being intended to reduce the size of the computer file corresponding to the digitized image (Column 2, lines 48-54).

Then, the image IP of the postal packet is transmitted and then displayed on the screen of the video-coding station for an operator who can perform functions such as defining the orientation and the direction of the lines of the address (See Figures 3 and 4).

Carlin et al., Ryan. Jr. and Lhomme are combinable because they are from the same field of endeavor.

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to have incorporated the video coding station of Lhomme with the hybrid

mail facility as taught by Carlin et al. and the business mail reply system taught by Ryan, Jr.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to capture the image of the completed envelope and further associate the image with the monitoring system. A goal of mail production equipment and processes is to quickly and efficiently provide a large quantity of mail communications to many different recipients. Sensing devices such as a camera are in place to help identify the occurrence of errors and mishandling. When an error is found within a stage, the system can provide for notification of errors so that corrective action may be taken.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine the video coding system of Lhomme with the business reply mail system as taught by Ryan, Jr. with the mail sorting and processing system of Carlin et al. to obtain the invention as specified in claims 2 and 3.

5. Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carlin et al., in view of Ryan, Jr. as applied to claim 6 above, in further in view of Short, III et al. (US 7,085,775).

Carlin et al. teaches a method for monitoring the status of mail communications including the electronic commingling of hybrid mail as described above and Ryan, Jr. teaches a business mail reply system. However, Carlin et al., and Ryan, Jr. do not disclose expressly the step of displaying the status of one or more individual mail pieces and individual communications includes providing color coded graphical representations

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of documents, the color coded representations indicating status conditions as different colors.

Short, III et al. disclose a technique including methods and resulting systems for managing a fleet of vehicles or any object or article capable of being moved is provided (Column 3, lines 64-67).

This technique provides software and hardware tools or software libraries to enable easy interfacing between custom vehicle management systems with a pre-existing management system(s) (Column 4, lines 3-6).

Referring to Figure 2D which is a simplified example of a Short, III et al.'s dispatch screen.

In an embodiment using the dispatch screen, the computer aided dispatch system updates the order record with time information such as a dispatch time, a pick-up time, and a delivery time as such times (or in real time). Accordingly, any user with access to the computer aided dispatch system can query a selected order and see the status of the order at a selected time without disturbing any other user (Column 9, lines 14-20).

Optionally the **dispatch screen is color** for easy identification of selected orders and the like. For example a **green** highlight of an order indicates an order that requires a delivery time of one hour or less. A **red** highlight indicates an order with a delivery time of a half an hour or less. Once a selected cut-off time passes, the orders can remain in red, but flash continuously to indicate a missed order or the like. Of course,

other color selections and indications can be used depending upon the particular application (Column 9, lines 47-55).

Carlin et al., Ryan, Jr. and Short III et al. are combinable because they are from the same field of endeavor.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to view on a display information about documents and mail pieces gathered at multiple stages in the mail production and management process is preferably provided to a centralized location, to provide the greatest capability for planning, coordination and analysis. Detailed views can indicate the status of inserts and the specific contents of each envelope. Incomplete, lost, and missing document are appropriately flagged via the color codes on the display.

Therefore, it would have been obvious to combine the Database Method and system for conducting integrated dispatching as taught by Short et al. with the business reply mail system as taught by Ryan, Jr. with the mail sorting and processing system of Carlin et al. to obtain the invention as specified in claim 7.

Conclusion

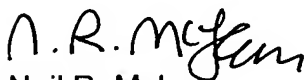
The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Benson (US 7,133,851).

Benson teaches a system for combined mailing of a plurality of diverse publications to a plurality of recipients at an optimized mail rate.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Neil R. McLean whose telephone number is 571.270.1679. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 7:30AM-5:00PM EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, King Poon can be reached on 571.272.7440. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.


Neil R. McLean
07/30/2007


KING Y. POON
PRIMARY EXAMINER
Supervising Patent